

*** NETANSWERS INTERNET EXTRA ***

*** Number 30: Three Net Resources for People Who Love to Learn ***

Ready to learn something new? Then try these three Internet resources -- sites where you can find out the meaning of sang-froid, become a computer guru, or learn to jumpstart a car.

-.-.- A Word A Day -.-.-

As a writer, I try to have an engaging complement of words at my disposal. You don't have to be a writer to appreciate words -- the more words you know, the better your reading and speaking skills will be. A great way to fill your brain with interesting new words is to subscribe to the A Word a Day mailing list.

Subscribers to the list receive a daily e-mail message offering details about a particular English word, including the pronunciation, definition and an example of usage. Frequently it also includes interesting tidbits about the history of the word. My favorite feature is the themes -- each week, the words presented all have to do with a particular theme such as words with weird pronunciations, words about forts and castles, and "people and places that became words."

Sometimes I think a day's word is much too easy, but the next day I'll be rewarded for my patience with a nice juicy one. Are you familiar with the words sang-froid, importune, and celerity? After only a few days as a subscriber to this mailing list, you'll be a bona-fide linguaphile.

To subscribe to the A Word a Day mailing list, send an e-mail message to wsmith@wordsmith.org with a subject line of "subscribe your name". To peruse the archives of featured words or learn more about this free resource, point your web browser to <http://www.wordsmith.org/awad/index.html>

-.-.- Ziff Davis University -.-.-

If you're itching to enhance your computer skills, check out Ziff Davis University's selection of online courses. ZDU (<http://www.zdu.com>) offers about 50 courses -- participants interact with the instructor and classmates via a web-based message board. Lessons and assignments all take place on the Web: classes include programming, databases, Photoshop and using the Internet. You can take classes to improve your resume (and marketability to employers) or just for fun and personal growth.

A unique advantage to ZDU is its low cost -- students can take an unlimited number of classes for a flat fee of \$4.95 per month. Students take an average of three courses at ZDU. According to George Kane, director of ZD University, participants are generally people who use computers or the web in their job and who need to learn new computer skills to stay up to date. "This is a way to do it without taking three days out of your job. You can do it in your pajamas or on your lunch break because it's asynchronous." Online training is a flexible way to learn new computer skills, but isn't the way to go if you're concerned about having a certificate to hang on your wall.

Then again, if your twice-used ThighMaster is lost somewhere under a pile of dirty laundry, and you never quite managed to finish that correspondence course, online

training is probably not for you. (Participating in an in-person class with other students and an engaging trainer is probably a better bet for those of us with carefully honed procrastination skills.)

-.-.- Learn2 -.-.-

Knowing how to tweak graphics in Photoshop or program in Java can be useful, but often it pays to have more pedestrian skills like knowing how to jumpstart a car and calculate a tip. That's where Learn2 comes in. Learn2 (<http://www.learn2.com>) is a fantastic site that offers tutorials on doing those little life tasks. Need to know how to balance your checkbook, tie a necktie, or get a close shave? Perhaps you need to fix a leaky faucet or capture a pesky rodent... Or maybe you've always wanted to know how to make stained glass? Learn2 offers life lessons in all of these topics and others with short, graphical tutorials.

The site's tutorials are grouped into categories like household (for example: soundproof a room, hang a picture, remove wallpaper), recreation (build a campfire, juggle, throw a Frisbee), and automobiles (change your oil, drive a stick shift, buy a used car).

Thanks to Learn2, I now know how to make a flightworthy paper airplane and can whistle as well as a seasoned New Yorker hailing a cab. I can barely contain my sang-froid.

=*=*= SITES MENTIONED IN THIS ISSUE =*=*=

A Word A Day: <http://www.wordsmith.org/awad/index.html>

Ziff Davis University: <http://www.zdu.com>

Learn2: <http://www.learn2.com>

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The NetAnswers Internet Extra is free to all CompuServe members. It's available in the Internet Community Forum -- GO INETCOM and look in file library 11, "NetAnswers".

Got comments or ideas for future issues? We want to hear 'em. Just send a message to savetz@compuserve.com (74774,2725).

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